

# NFWF's Pulling Together Initiative

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Invasive plants represent one of North America's greatest threats to biological diversity and ecological stability, costing the U.S. economy \$142 billion annually. Over 1,400 species of non-native plants have been characterized by various federal and state authorities as invasive "pests." Federal scientists have estimated that non-indigenous weeds infest an additional 3 million acres each year, an area roughly twice the size of Delaware. Our natural areas, including wildlife refuges, parks, forests, rangelands, and urban green spaces, are under constant assault from these invasive plants. Additionally, working landscapes such as farms, ranches, and managed forests are also being adversely affected.

**Support for the PTI grant program is provided by NFWF and six federal agencies each with their own funding priorities.**

- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Department of Defense
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
- U.S.D.A. Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service

Invasive plants do not respect legal boundaries or fence lines: they invade public and private lands alike. Control of only one part of an infestation without active management on surrounding lands will not result in long-term recovery of native species. To stop the spread of invasive plants and control existing populations, innovative partnerships are needed that can connect state and federal agency expertise and resources with local governments and individual landowners who manage affected areas.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF) Pulling Together Initiative (PTI) helps build such partnerships by encouraging federal agency participation in local weed control efforts. The PTI Program's goals are to 1) prevent, manage, or eradicate invasive and noxious plants through a coordinated program of public/private partnerships, and 2) increase public awareness of the adverse impacts of invasive and noxious plants.

The PTI provides grant support on a competitive basis for the formation of local Weed Management Area partnerships. Support for the PTI grant program is provided by NFWF and six federal agencies, each with its own funding priorities. Some of PTI's successful Mid-Atlantic projects encompass the control of common reed (*Phragmites australis*) at sites along the Delaware Bay, support for community-based management of Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) in Philadelphia's Wissahickon Park, and coordination of weed control efforts along the upper Delaware River among federal, state, and local partners. Competitive projects typically propose an Integrated Pest Management approach, using all available tools to fight invasive weeds.

The NFWF encourages applications to PTI from community-based weed management partnerships nationwide. Prospective applicants should review the NFWF website, <http://www.nfwf.org/programs/pti.htm>, for more information about current agency funding priorities and the PTI grant application process. If you feel you are eligible for a PTI grant, please consider applying.

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